

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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Docket: MSHA-2014-0031

Exposure of Underground Miners to Diesel Exhaust

Comment On: MSHA-2014-0031-0076

Exposure of Underground Miners to Diesel Exhaust: Request for Information; Reopening of Rulemaking Record; Extension of Comment Period

Document: MSHA-2014-0031-0113

Comment from F F, NA

Submitter Information

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General Comment

STOP ENVIRONMENTAL ACTVIST from Damaging pipeline infrastructure NOT GOOD FOR AMERICA, U.S. Representative Kristi Noem OCT 23 2017 urged the U.S. Department of Justice to evaluate the security of America's pipeline infrastructure. A Letter Signed by Noem and more than 80 MEMEBERS of CONGRESS, the letter highlights recent attempts to disrupt the transmission of oil and natural gas through pipelines. In some instances, individuals have used blow torches to burn holes in pipelines or promoted violence against oil and gas company employees. Noem is seeking more information from the Department on any policy changes needed to better secure this critical infrastructure. "When an individual burns a hole through a pipeline currently in operation, there is a high probability this could ignite the contents, killing not only the perpetrator but other innocent victims," wrote Noem in the letter. "We realize the Department of Justice faces unique challenges when confronting these crimes... But maintaining safe and reliable energy infrastructure is a matter of national security."

LETTER READS ; Multiple media sources have reported recent attempts to disrupt the transmission of oil and natural gas through interstate and international pipeline infrastructure. In some instances, individuals have used blow torches to burn holes in pipelines or promoted violence against oil and gas company employees. In April, a newspaper in Colorado went as far as publishing a letter to the editor that stated, "If the oil and gas industry puts fracking wells in our neighborhoods, threatening our lives and our children's lives, then don't we have a moral responsibility to blow up wells and eliminate fracking and workers?"

While we are strong advocates for the First Amendment, violence toward individuals and

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destruction of property are both illegal and potentially fatal.

Damaging pipeline infrastructure poses multiple risks to humans and the environment. When an individual burns a hole through a pipeline currently in operation, there is a high probability this could ignite the contents, killing not only the perpetrator but other innocent victims. It also has the potential to cause property and environmental damage, as well as disrupt services to communities and consumers.

Recent incidents of individuals attempting to shut down lines by turning valves at pump stations illustrate the danger. Operation of pipeline facilities by unqualified personnel could result in a rupture - the consequences of which would be devastating. Even though some activists commit these acts of sabotage to raise awareness about climate change, they only create the serious risk of harm to the environment they claim to care about.

We realize the Department of Justice (DOJ) faces unique challenges when confronting these crimes, including identifying suspects amidst the rural and remote infrastructure across the country. But maintaining safe and reliable energy infrastructure is a matter of national security.

With this information in mind, we request that you respond to the following questions:

1. Do existing federal statutes, including the Patriot Act and Pipeline Safety Act, adequately arm the DOJ to prosecute criminal activity against energy infrastructure at the federal level?
2. Has the DOJ taken any prosecutorial or investigative action against those involved with the highly publicized October 11, 2016, attempted sabotage of four major crude oil pipelines in multiple states? If not, please explain the DOJ's reasoning for not pursuing this case.
3. Does the DOJ intend to pursue federal prosecutorial or investigative action of any individuals who knowingly and willfully damaged or destroyed interstate or international pipeline infrastructure?
4. Do the attacks against the nation's energy infrastructure, which pose a threat to human life, and appear to be intended to intimidate and coerce policy changes, fall within the DOJ's understanding of 18 U.S.C. Section 2331(5)

Unnecessary permitting delays, costly regulatory requirements and uncertainty in the leasing process have discouraged oil and gas development on federal lands. For example, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued Applications for Permits to Drill in an average of 257 days in 2016. By contrast, State agencies issued permits in just 30 days on average. America needs a reliable Gas and Oil Production, storage, PIPELINE transportation permitting process to increase American energy production. Remove government roadblocks and bureaucratic red tape that hinder and delay American energy production and American job creation.

INVESTIGATE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVIST.